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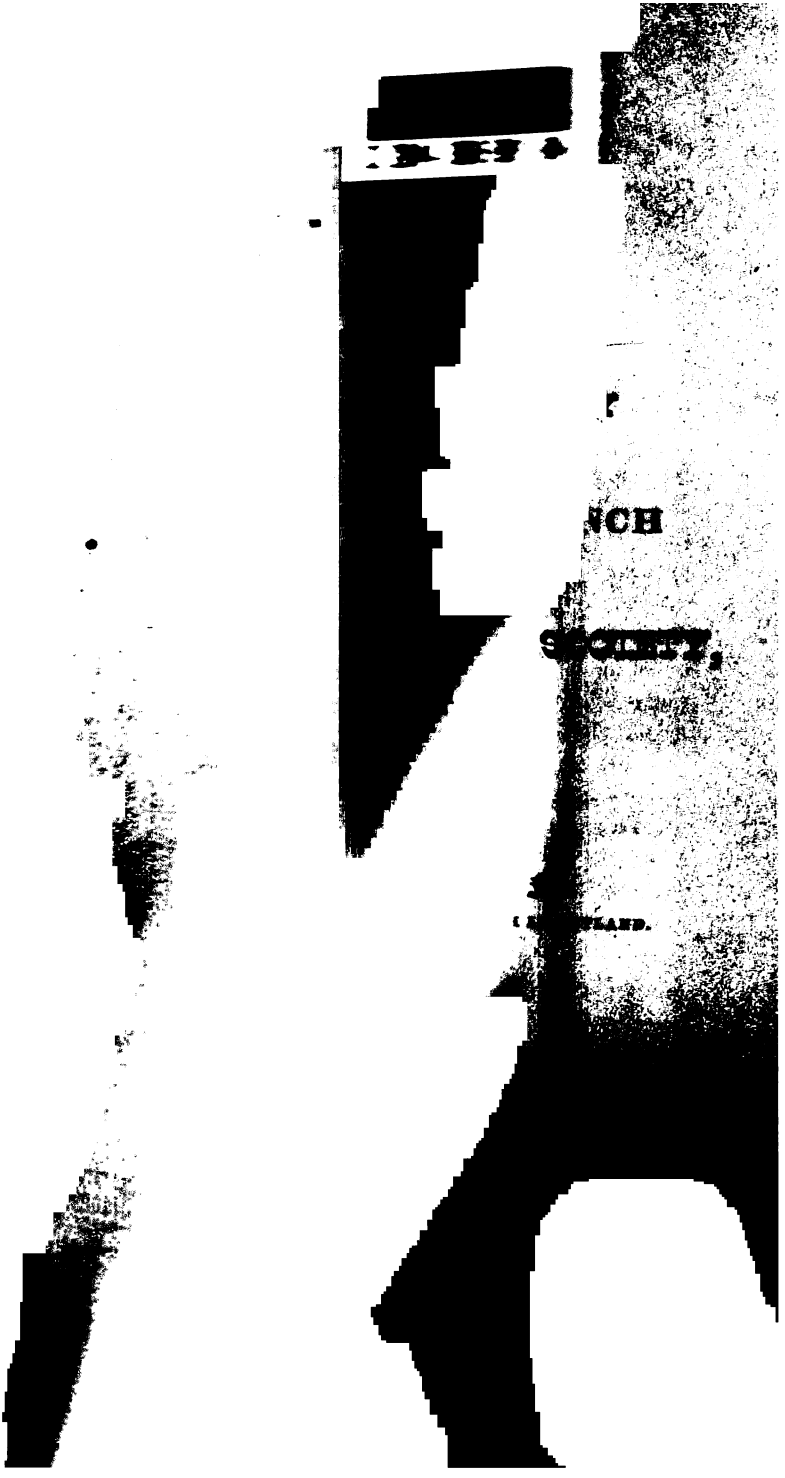

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A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT BRANDON, (VT.)

ON THE

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

NORTHWESTERN BRANCH

OF THE

AMERICAN EDUCATION SOCIETY,

JANUARY 11, 1826.

By Charles Walker, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN RUTLAND.

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1826.

SERMON.

Matthew, vi. 10.—"THY KINGDOM COME."

Of that inimitable form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, the text is a most precious and significant part. The object of this petition is the enlargement of God's spiritual kingdom in this world and the universal prevalence of the principles of holiness. To bring about this object, the ultimate accomplishment of which is made sure by the veracity and immutability of a divine promise, God is pleased to make use of human instrumentality. Man has an agency in the production of the great result. And although Jehovah reserves to himself the high prerogative of giving efficiency to the means employed—so that whoever planteth or watereth, it is God alone that giveth the increase—yet the means are indispensable. No achievements are made for the kingdom of God on earth—no conquests of grace over nations or individuals are celebrated—no portion of the revolted human family is brought back to duty and allegiance, without the instrumentality of human exertions. The instruments, indeed, are weak; and they are, by the Almighty Agent, designed to be weak, "that the power may be of God, and not of man." But their weakness does not destroy their utility.

Among the means to be employed for the enlargement of the spiritual kingdom on earth, *prayer*, by the appointment of God, holds a conspicuous

place. The design of prayer is to secure the efficiency of a divine influence in the work of overcoming the perverseness of the human will, and purifying the sources of human feeling and action. To effect this moral renovation, God "gives His Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

Jesus Christ, therefore, taught his disciples to pray. He instructed them to utter the petition contained in the text—"Thy kingdom come." This was *one* means by which they were to seek the advancement of the holy empire. But the utterance of this prayer did not constitute the only means which they were required to employ. In addition to this, they were directed to go forth and preach the gospel. They were to instruct, exhort, and warn their fellow-men. By humble prayer in their closets they were to commence their work; but they were not to confine themselves to the place of retirement. "Go," said their Divine Master, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

The kingdom of Christ is to be advanced by means. So thought the Apostles of our Lord, when, after having raised their prayers to God for the guidance and energies of the Holy Spirit, "they went forth, and preached that men should repent."

Soon after the ascension of Christ to that "glory he had with the Father before the world was," the disciples were collected together "in an upper room." In this place of retirement, "they continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." God heard their prayers, and sent down upon them the influences of the Holy Spirit. But while they remained thus retired, no special divine influences descended upon

the world around them—no additions were made to the church of Christ—no inroads were made on the empire of darkness—no enlargement was given to the Redeemer's kingdom. But having kindled their own souls into a holy flame at the altar of retired devotion; and having, as one means for its advancement, offered the prayer,—"Thy kingdom come"—they proceeded to the use of other means. They went forth, and preached boldly the truth of the gospel, making known "the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God." Their first onset on the territories of darkness was successful, and a conquest of three thousand souls swelled the triumphs of that day's victory.

Christ's kingdom is to be built up by means. So thinks the pious *parent*, who looks around on the children God has given him, and for whose spiritual welfare he feels a tender concern. He considers that the eternal destiny of the children of his love, is, in a very important sense, committed to his decision. He prays for them. In the closet, and at the domestic altar, his daily prayer is that their spirits may be baptized with the Holy Ghost. But he is far from imagining that prayer constitutes his only duty in relation to the spiritual welfare of his children This means he will never venture to omit. But there are other means which it would be equally criminal to omit, and without which prayer itself would be wholly unavailing. He must begin early to fasten on their minds the principles of religion. With parental love and authority, he must instruct, warn and restrain them. With unremitting assiduity, he must labour to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Without these exertions his prayers have neither sincerity nor meaning.

Christ's kingdom is to be promoted by means. So thinks the faithful *minister of the gospel*, when he surveys the people of his charge. He looks around on the individuals and families who are the objects of his immediate solicitude, recognizes their well known countenances, reflects that they "are by nature children of wrath, even as others," knows that they need a moral renovation, and that the dominion of Christ must be set up in their hearts, or they will inevitably perish. To his closet he repairs, and the burden of his prayer is—"Lord revive thy work—set up thy kingdom in the hearts of the dear people of my charge—let salvation come to all their souls." But he does not shut himself up in his closet, never to come forth. Besides praying, he has something else to do. He issues from his retirement and enters the pulpit, with the messages of salvation glowing in his heart and pouring from his lips. He announces the truths of God's word, and urges them on the consciences of his auditors. Without these public labours his secret prayers would be of no avail.—Pray indeed he must. He must also take the trumpet of the gospel, and sound long and loud the notes of alarm. Standing in the watch-tower, he must descry the danger, and warn men to flee from the wrath to come.

Thus far, good men, in all ages, have acted on the principle that Christ's kingdom is to be advanced by *means*. But for centuries past, the churches of protestant christendom seem to have forgotten this principle in its application to the general dissemination of christianity. Good men have looked abroad on the darkness of paganism, and have seen the tyrant, sin, stretching forth an unresisted sceptre, and holding an unbroken dominion

over the successive generations of earth's unevangelized population. And what have they done? They have, indeed, uttered the prayer—"Thy kingdom come."–They have offered the petition—"Let the heathen be given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Having thus prayed, they thought their duty towards the unevangelized parts of the world, discharged.

But, thanks to God, a new era has commenced. It is now generally believed in the christian church that prayers alone will never renovate the heathen world—that something must be *done* to impart light and knowledge to those who dwell in darkness. As soon as this rule was adopted and acted upon, the heralds of salvation were sent forth to the pagan world, "and the wilderness and the solitary place was glad for them, and the desert blossomed as the rose." Christian churches have been planted in heathen lands. Jehovah has smiled on the enterprize. And here and there a spot, rescued from the pollution of all that is impure in moral abomination, exhibits the freshness and loveliness of moral beauty.

Still there was one subject to which the principle had not been applied. Christ told his followers to pray "the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest." Good men, in all ages of the christian church, have offered this prayer. How often have we heard the petition that the Lord would raise up, qualify, and send forth faithful labourers into his vineyard—that he would supply destitute churches and desolate places with pastors after His own heart. Having offered this prayer, it was taken for granted that duty was performed, that nothing further was to be done. Just as

if the universal law of Christ's kingdom ceased to operate in this case! Just as if no exertions were necessary to secure the object prayed for!

But, I ask, in what part of the statute book of heaven is it recorded that in the case under consideration, nothing is to be done? Where is it written, that, while we are to make exertions to obtain every other object of our prayers, no exertions are necessary to increase the number of labourers in the gospel vineyard? Let us look at facts for an answer. It is a fact that, while, christians have daily prayed the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest, the number of labourers in proportion to the extent of the harvest-field, has been constantly decreasing. The ratio of the increase of population in this country, has been at least two to one above the ratio of the increase of well educated ministers. A moral desolation, wide in extent, was constantly growing still wider, and the harvest, already white, was, for want of labourers to gather it in, left to the ravages of the destroyer.

And why was this? Does not God listen to the prayers of his children? And is he not as willing to hear them, when they pray for an increase of the number of the ministers of the gospel, as when they pray for any other object? Why then has not their number augmented in proportion to the wants of the churches, and the increase of the population of our country? The answer is plain. Here christians forgot the standing rule of Christ's kingdom. In this case they did not act on the principle that means are necessary, that exertions must be made to obtain the object for which prayer is offered.

Alarmed by the great and constantly increasing

deficiency in the number of well-educated and pious ministers, some individuals, a few years ago, began to think that effort must accompany prayer to supply this deficiency. It was felt that this object is to be promoted by means—that here is no suspension of the universal law of Christ's kingdom.

Accordingly a plan was adopted, by which those sons of the church whose hearts God had sanctified by his Holy Spirit, and whose want of pecuniary means rendered it impossible for them to defray the necessary expenses of a public education, were to be assisted in the prosecution of studies which might prepare them for the office of teachers in the christian church. This plan has met the approbation of all who indulge enlarged and consistent views on the subject.

There are still, no doubt, many who content themselves with offering the prayer, without making any exertions to obtain the blessing—many who use the words "Lord send forth labourers into thy harvest," while they move not a finger to assist a labourer in entering the field. They would not give a single dollar to have their prayers answered. The precise weight of such prayers, I will not take upon me to determine. The day of judgment will decide whether they are any thing but *wind.*

The plan, however, of educating poor, pious youth for the gospel ministry, originally adopted by few, has now the approbation and support of many. And it is with them a matter of astonishment that it was not adopted before—that any should profess to pray for an object which they make no effort to obtain—and that this invariable rule in the christian dispensation should have been

so long disregarded by the churches. There are many men and women in different parts of our country, who love, by their annual contributions, to swell that fund of charity which goes to the educating of pious youth for the gospel ministry.

And what has been the result? Precisely what a consistent view of the laws of Christ's kingdom would have led us to anticipate. When proper means are employed, success always follows.—There has been no violation of this rule in the present case. So soon as the church began to labour as well as pray, the number of spiritual teachers began to increase. So soon as the utterance of the prayer—"Lord send forth labourers into thy harvest," was accompanied by correspondent exertions to secure the object of prayer, Jehovah listened to the petition. He sanctified the hearts of many young men, gave them an ardent desire to become the heralds of salvation, and cast them into the arms of the church to be educated for the sacred work Aided by pious liberality some of these have completed their preparatory studies and are now successfully engaged, in different sections of our country, and in different parts of the world, as preachers of the everlasting gospel. Others are still in a course of preparation.

Nor is the influence of the system of educating indigent, pious young men for the gospel ministry confined to those who are thus educated. Roused by these exertions, and by the facts which the friends of Education Societies have placed before the public mind, others, who are able to defray the expenses of their own education, are induced to seek a preparation for the sacred work. And what is more, through the salutary influence of the beneficiaries, while members of Acadamies and

Colleges, the spirit of God has descended on some of these institutions, and many of the students have been made the subjects of renewing grace. Of these, a large proportion prepare for the holy ministry. By these means, a number, perhaps more than equal to the number of the beneficiaries, prepare for the sacred office, who, but for the exertions of Education Societies, probably never would have entered on a course of preparation.

Thus the Lord of the harvest hears the prayers of his people. Now when the church begins to make exertions to supply her own waste places, she sees the arm of the Lord extended for her help. Now, when christians bring to this object a practical application of the principle that the kingdom of Christ is to be advanced by *means*,—that effort must accompany prayer, Jehovah withholds not the desired blessing.

The subject, to which your attention has been called, shows the *usefulness and importance of Education Societies.*

Perhaps no one branch of that system of benevolent operations which characterizes the day in which we live, has met with so much opposition, as that of educating, by charity, indigent, pious youth for the gospel ministry. Against this, not only the infidel and scoffer, but many who profess to love the interests of the church, have urged a host of objections. Time, at present does not permit me to answer these objections. Nor is it necessary. They have been refuted again and again by irrefragable arguments.

Only grant what has a thousand times been proved, and what is *visible* on every survey of our country—that there has been, and still is a great

want of well-educated ministers of the gospel—only let this be granted, (and who that knows any thing of the subject does not grant it?) and the duty of putting forth an effort to increase the number of qualified christian teachers, is as clear as a sun-beam. When there is a want of this kind, has not Christ enjoined it on his followers to "pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest?" But Christ never commanded his church to pray for an object which she made no exertions to obtain. If, as has been proved by the experiment, the church, by the blessing of God, has power to increase the number of spiritual teachers; then without the exercise of this power, she might pray forever *in vain* for the desired increase. No prayers are availing which are unaccompanied by corresponding exertions.

I do not assert that Education Societies, appropriately so called, afford the only medium through which these exertions can be made. A man who has ability may educate for the ministry his own son, whose heart God has renewed by his Spirit; or he may educate the son of his poor neighbour, without the formality of a society's operations.—But something must be *done*—some efforts must be made to enlarge the number of the ministers of religion; or else the prayers which are offered up for this object are as vain as the *breath* with which they are uttered.

Wise and good men have adopted and matured the plan now pursued by Education Societies.—This plan seems preferable to any other, as it gives opportunity for every person, according to his ability, to help forward the object; and does not impose on an individual a burden which he

is unable to bear. It affords a medium through which all who pray for an increase of spiritual labourers, may testify the sincerity of their prayers, by such pecuniary offerings as circumstances permit. It offers a channel for a thousand little streams, which, separately, could not move a single wheel in the system, but, being united, form a power sufficient to put the whole in motion.

I might speak at large of the usefulness and importance of Education Societies, as it respects the salutary influence of their beneficiaries as members of Colleges and instructors of schools—and also as it respects their labours when they enter on the duties of the sacred profession. But these things do not come within the scope of my design. I simply wish to show the utility of such societies as affording an opportunity for every man to *manifest the sincerity of his prayers.*

The good man offers the prayer—"Thy kingdom come," and then inquires how he may advance that kingdom. He knows that the preaching of the gospel is absolutely essential for the establishment and growth of churches, and for the promotion of christianity. He learns that whole sections of his own beloved country, and whole nations of pagans are destitute of the preached word. And he learns too, that though the fields are already white, yet the labourers are few. With this knowledge he enters his closet, and according to his Saviour's direction, "prays the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

But if he be a consistent christian, he does not feel contented to pray for an object which he does nothing to promote. He sees an inconsistency in such praying. He inquires, what can I *do?* Per-

haps he is a poor man, and is unable to educate his own son for the ministry; or, if he be rich, perhaps his own son is irreligious and would not be a minister if he should educate him. He is convinced that he must *do something*, or cease to pray for this object. He feels the force of the sacred declaration—"If a brother or a sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"

The existence of an Education Society, relieves him from the dilemma. Into the treasury of that society he can cast the *testimony* of his prayer's sincerity. And while he weeps over the desolations of Zion, laments the great deficiency in the number of watchmen on her walls, and raises his ardent cries to Zion's King that he would multiply the messengers of salvation; he has the opportunity and the satisfaction of *doing* something to enlarge the number of christian ministers, and to cause them who sit in desolate places to sing—"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth."

APPENDIX.

SIXTH REPORT

OF THE

DIRECTORS

OF THE

NORTHWESTERN BRANCH

OF THE

AMERICAN EDUCATION SOCIETY.

IMPRESSED with the importance of the object, which as directors of the North Western Branch of the American Education Society, we are bound to cherish and promote, we eagerly seize the occasion presented by the present anniversary, to hold it up before our constituents, and the christian publick, in all its magnitude and grandeur. Our friends and patrons will unite with us in saying, that we should ill deserve the name of American citizens, and especially of American *christians*, if we were indifferent to the highest welfare, and best interests of our beloved country. Such indifference, we certainly do not feel. If we do not entirely mistake our views and sentiments, we cherish a solicitude, habitually deep, oftentimes intense, to expend our resources and our strength in promoting the substantial good, and in elevating the character of the great community, to which we are quite willing to belong, and whose rising glory we rejoice to contemplate.—And while thousands of our fellow citizens are exerting their best energies in those imposing enterprizes, which are so largely contributing to national prosperity and splendour, we would employ on our country's behalf an agency, which perhaps, involves fewer striking movements, but which promises to confer higher and more endu-

ring benefits. In those commercial engagements, which are pouring at her feet the riches of foreign climes, we have neither inclination nor opportunity to embark. We do not expect to raise her reputation or increase her glory by building among our hills and valleys "proud cities," or erecting splendid monuments. Internal improvements on a large scale, we cannot well attempt. But more than this, it is our privilege to attempt—more than this in promoting the interests of this society, we are actually attempting to exalt and bless our country.

An acquaintance with the youth, who breathe our mountain air, the directors are persuaded, will convince any accurate observer, that they are gifted with intellectual capacities, which invite cultivation, and promise richly to repay it. The circumstances, in which a kind providence has placed them, are well suited to produce mental energy—are favourable to those efforts, which are requisite to mental discipline. They are equally removed from that poverty which depresses and cripples the understanding, and from that affluence, which dissipates and enfeebles it. The best means for subduing, enriching, and refining the intellect—for acquiring a thorough and finished education are brought fully within their reach. Nor should it for a moment be forgotten, that in the effusions of the Holy Spirit, with which from time to time, our churches have been visited, the divine Hand has not unfrequently been employed in bringing whatever mental capacity, vigour, and attainment any of our youth might possess, under the direction and controul of christian principle. With young men of such a character within our reach, we may do much to enrich and bless our country. There are many masculine intellects into whose capacities the spirit of christianity has been poured, which we may search out in their retirement and draw forth from their obscurity: which we may form, and discipline, and polish, and send forth to exert a powerful and a blessed influence on the publick mind. And this is the agency, which the directors and members of this association, as auxiliary to the American Education Society, has for six years been employing, to elevate the character, and promote the happiness, and brighten the prospects, of the surrounding community.

The friends and patrons of this and similar associations, the directors are happy to believe, are not tasking their wisdom and expending their strength in vain;—they are employing means, worthy of the grand design, they have been enabled to conceive, and which they hope to see accomplished.—To young men of piety and promise;—of vigorous minds, self-denying habits, and christian principle, they extend a cordial and efficient patronage.—That their beneficiaries may be fitted to exert a powerful, official influence, when introduced to the scenes of active life, they are admitted to the privileges, and subjected to the restraints, of a thor-

ough mental discipline. They are elevated to the publick school—brought within the college. Now they are placed by the side of youth, who are the hope and boast of parents, distinguished for affluence or station. On such young men, the directors believe, that their beneficiaries can hardly fail to exert an influence, more or less powerful and benign. In no place is the sentiment more clearly and frequently illustrated, or more deeply felt than in the publick school, *that intelligence is power*. A thousand embarrassments may be thrown around it; it may come forth from obscurity, destitute of all the attractions of wealth and splendour: No matter. It may speak, and its voice shall be heard —its influence shall be felt. But let genius be chastized and sanctified by christian piety; let it be elevated, directed, and controuled by christian principle, and its influence within college-walls will not only be powerful, but salutary. It will put forth its powers in bringing idleness into deep contempt, and vice into merited disgrace; in giving authority and currency to wholesome laws and good regulations; in elevating the standard of intellectual attainment and moral worth, An influence so benign and powerful, not a few of the beneficiaries of this, and similar societies are continually exerting. They are respected for their intellectual strength, activity, and attainment. They stand up the avowed friends and cordial supporters of every agency, which may promote ardour and success in study, soundness of morals, and purity of heart.—And they are making an impression. Here they are putting a damper on the fires of passion; disarming temptation of its wiles; and exposing the intrigues, and staying the progress of vice.—There, they are kindling in the bosom a passion for study, pouring on the soul a generous enthusiasm—rousing the dormant energies of genius. Whatever of good resolution, they may mark in the companions of their study, they are forward to encourage and confirm; if christian principle begins to exert its controul over any mind, they stand up to cherish its hallowed influence, and draw forth its appropriate exercises in acts of piety and usefulness.—And in the frequent effusions of the Holy Spirit, with which many of our colleges have for a few years past been visited, their zeal, activity, and success in the cause of christian truth ought not to be forgotten.

The directors are aware, that this statement may not be applicable *to every* student, who is aided by the hand of christian kindness in his efforts to prepare for publick usefulness. It would be strange, indeed, if in this high and holy enterprize, no disappointment were in any case experienced. Such cases, however, have been *few*. But the instances have not been few, to which the statement in question may be applied in all its length, and breadth, and force. This train of thought, the directors believe, carries

the mind forward to the inevitable conclusion, that their beneficiaries are exerting a powerful and happy influence in forming and modifying the character of the companions of their study, upon whom the hand of Providence has bestowed some of its best gifts and largest endowments. Of these not a few will presently be raised to stations of honour, emolument, and responsibility. Some will rise to the hall of legislation, some to the seat of justice; and others to the chair of magistracy. But to whatever point of elevation, they may rise—in whatever sphere they may move, they will carry with them the character, the elements of which were wrought and combined within the university. Thus they become a medium, through which the efforts of this and similar societies reach and affect the publick mind. At almost all our Northern Colleges, an induction of facts may easily be made, amply sufficient to sustain and confirm this train of thought; and to give authority and force to the conclusions, which we have ventured to derive from it. Whoever goes forth to gather up and arrange these facts will find, that the refinements of literature and the riches of science are sought with new avidity, and marked success: that a correctness of habits. and a purity of morals prevails, which leaves little for the hand of discipline to attempt; that the direct and indirect influence of christian principle on a large portion of the under graduates is strong. On this subject, we gladly refer the hesitating and inquisitive to the official statements which a number of colleges forwarded to the directors of the American Education Society, and which may be found on the pages of their *seventh* annual report. These statements are highly honourable to the influence and efforts of the beneficiaries of education societies.—Nor ought the fact to be withheld or overlooked in this connection, that they are not unfrequently of signal benefit to the communities, which secured their services during the season, which they annually devote to the business of instruction. A deep and happy impression they are often enabled to make on the young mind.—Indeed, a number of instances are remembered, and may be pointed out, in which the Holy Spirit has made them the instruments of awakening the young and the old, to a serious concern for their eternal welfare—of leading the young and the old to the cross of Christ. And where their efforts have not resulted in effects so unutterably precious, their influence has generally been powerful and salutary. Surely we should not be slow, to seize upon this fact, as a proof, that God approves the enterprize, in which we are engaged; and as a pledge of the continuance of His smiles, and of the future usefulness of our beneficiaries.

But these benefits, inestimably precious as they are, the directors can regard in no other light than as the *collateral* effects of their great design. It may be doubted whether in the expectations of

the men who first struck out the plan of an education society, they were at all anticipated. The object, which awakened their anxieties, and absorbed their thoughts; for which they combined their wisdom and their strength, was nothing less than the raising up and sending forth of a company of able and faithful christian preachers equal to the wants of all the feeble churches and destitute communities in this republick, while they hoped to bless the heathen with here and there a messenger of mercy. The benefits, which have already been described, as the result of their labours, may without impiety be compared, as we compare the minute with the magnificent, with what in he language of theology is called the *cumulative* goodness of God. They are like the overflowings of a heart, replete with benevolent affection—agitated with benevolent emotion. They are the indirect, yet precious effects of a plan, which employs the wisest means to remove human want and woe;—to pour upon thousands—upon millions of hearts, which are now corrupted by guilt, and depressed by sorrow, a sanctifying and cheering influence. And they certainly shed a clear light upon the *tendency* of the design, which education societies embrace.—In pursuing this design, this society aims, as auxiliary to the parent institution, to confer the richest blessings on our beloved country. We would send forth in the character of able and faithful christian teachers, to toil for her best interests here and hereafter, some of her choicest sons:—men, inured to toil and self-denial; men of intelligence and enterprize; men, who without aspiring to literary distinction, or grasping at political honours, will stand up the fast friends and cordial supporters of every valuable institution; who will give "arm and soul"—resources, influence, and strength, freely, cheerfully, and while they live to the diffusion of christian truth. We would send forth men, who breathing the spirit, and invested with the authority of ministers of Jesus Christ, will welcome severe privation, and exhausting labour—will do and suffer any thing within the compass of human possibility, to bring dying sinners to obey His commands, and confide in His mercy. Thus we would pour a strong infusion of manly intelligence and christian virtue, into the mass of the community to which we belong. We would meliorate the condition of our fellow-citizens in this life;—would as instruments in the hand of God shed a strong light on the grave, to which they are hastening; would enrich them with the hope, and cheer them with the foretaste, of bliss in Heaven. Such is the elevated ground, on which we stand—such are the benefits, which we would scatter around us!

The directors do not think it necessary in this report to go into a lengthened detail of the operations and circumstances of the society. Such detail made out with accuracy and precision, may be found in the reports of former years. The history of the past

year has been marked by no event, which requires prominently to be exhibited, or minutely to be described. Such events are not to be expected. The principles, on which the directors select and receive the subjects of their bounty, and the measure and condition of their appropriations are subjects, which have been fully canvassed, and clearly exhibited. We have no new views on these subjects to state, no new conclusions to offer, no new plans to propose. We see no good reason to turn aside from the course, which we have all along been pursuing.

Our *funds* for some time have been completely exhausted. But lest too strong an inference should be derived from this fact, the statement should not be withheld, that the directors during the past year have been unable to find and employ an active and efficient agent, to make an impression, and receive contributions in behalf of our object. A *circular letter* has been issued, to awaken the attention, and arouse the exertions, of our numerous *local* agents; and, we trust, that the contribution to our funds, which has been taken up in the surrounding congregations, will afford fresh and affecting evidence, that we still have a hold on the confidence and resources of the christian publick. Decisive measures, we deeply feel, must be employed, to augment our means of usefulness.

Our friends and patrons will be willing to learn, that the character and course of their beneficiaries, the year past, have been such, as to reward the kindness, which we have been permitted to afford them; as to place in our hands a precious pledge, which we will not willingly relinquish, of their future activity and usefulness in the cause of God. As a general thing, they are devoted and successful scholars;—they breathe a spirit, and pursue a course honourable to their holy profession and sacred destination. We cordially commend them to the prayers, and confidence, and kindness of our christian brethren; and especially to the protection, guidance, and blessing of our gracious Lord!

Such is the brief review of the design, operations, and circumstances of this society, which the directors would hold up before the christian publick. They are sure, their friends and patrons would unite with them in saying;—Our efforts, we are painfully aware, are by no means commensurate with the exigencies of the case; with the warmth of our desires; or with the ability of the community to which we look for countenance and aid. When we direct our attention to the feeble churches, broken parishes, and new settlements within the limits of this state; when we extend our thoughts to our brethren and friends, who borne on the "tide of emigration," are sweeping before them the forests of the West, and South West, who are bereft of "the bread and water of life;" when we think of the many pagan nations, which are shrouded in the deepest gloom, our souls are moved within us. Every nerve is

strained for action. We are prepared to make an agony of effort, to pour the light of Heaven upon the darkness, in which our brethren are enveloped. And when we contemplate the churches of our Lord; when we see numbers of precious young men come to their communion tables, who have piety, enterprize, and talent—who feel themselves wholly devoted to the christian cause, and who would very gladly "spend and be spent" in exertions to promote it, if some kind hand were stretched out to aid them in preparing for the sacred office, our bosoms are agitated with intense desire, to draw them forth from their retirement, and consecrate them to the holy ministry.—And when we look around upon the community to which we belong; when we mark their character and habits—their activity, energy and zeal in pushing forward to the highest results any favourite project, we feel constrained to urge home upon them with trumpet tongue the most powerful appeals and pressing motives, to lend our enterprize their prompt and cordial assistance. We cannot bear the thought, that they should stand aloof from an object, so attractive in its aspect, and so important in its bearing on the best interests of our country. We have resolved never to let them rest until this object is fastened strongly on their hearts—until they stand up to make those efforts, which its interests and magnitude demand.

The directors are unable to conceive how any friend of his country, who is acquainted with their object, can view it with indifference. A slight examination of well authenticated facts is sufficient to fasten a painful conviction on every fair mind, that the religious necessities of our republick, arising from the want of christian institutions, are becoming every day more pressing and alarming.—And these facts are urged on our attention in a great variety of forms and by a thousand agencies. There are multiplied communities, scattered over our own hills and valleys, which are well nigh destitute of efficient, well-directed means of religious information and moral improvement. The condition of the numerous emigrants, who break forth from the bosom of New-England, and bury themselves in the forests of the West and South-West, is still more frightful and distressing. They are fast losing the impressions, which in the golden days of their childhood and youth, were fastened on their minds, by the hand of a kind parent or faithful pastor. They are fast losing the distinctive marks of a christian people. If they are neglected by their fellow-citizens, who have juster views, and a deeper sense of the value of christian institutions; if no efforts are made to arouse them to the perils, which are thickening around them; if nothing is done to meet and remove their wants, what can prevent them from sinking into the deepest ignorance and wretchedness? Is this a subject, over which any friend of his country will sleep? Who will not lend his ap-

proving smiles and cordial assistance to any agency, which may promise to remove an evil, so enormous and revolting? Has *that man* a spark of the hallowed fire in his bosom, which burnt with such intense ardour in the breasts of our pilgrim fathers; can *he* stand by the tomb of Washington, and claim kindred to the mighty dead, who refuses to pledge all, that is patriotick, all that is human in him, to sustain the pillars "of religion and morality," which Washington declared were "indispensable supports of political prosperity"—to extend and perpetuate the influence of christian institutions, for the sake of which our pilgrim fathers braved the dangers of a wintry ocean, and the perils of a howling wilderness? Patriots and philanthropists, we invite to gather around our banner;—to lend the object of this society their warm approbation—their influence—a portion of their property.

As directors of an education society, we cannot but rejoice in the prosperity and strength of the churches, which Jesus Christ has multiplied around us. To these churches, we would speak a word on the authority of their gracious Saviour. You do well, brethren, to hold your religious privileges in high estimation. You do well to rejoice in the sweet shining of the sabbath's sun. You do well to go up to the house of prayer with joyful haste, and hear with deep emotion God's messages of mercy. But amid your rich and multiplied religious privileges, we beseech you, forget not the wants, and woes, and prospects of numerous communities in our own fair republick, who have no sabbaths, no churches, no christian pastors. Will you not pity them, and send them at least, some fragments of living bread? Let no idle surmises; no petulant objections; no selfish pleas of ignorance and poverty, hold you back from the enterprize, in which we offer you a fellowship.

The directors are deeply impressed with the encouragement and assistance, which education societies have received through the agency of christian females. From a rapid glance at the various papers, in which a record of their efforts may be found, it appears, that besides a considerable amount of bedding and clothing, which in different places and in various circumstances, they have contributed to such societies; besides their exertions to remove the wants and cheer the spirits, of the indigent student, when sick; and in some instances to smooth and lighten his descent to the "dark and narrow house;" besides many hundreds, perhaps some thousands of dollars, with which they have enriched the funds of education societies, more than *ten thousand dollars* they have contributed, in making their ministers permanent members of these precious institutions! And this we cannot but regard as a very happy method of aiding the design, which we are combined to accomplish. It not only promotes the grand object of the institution to the full

amount of the donation, but confers also in a delicate and touching manner, an obligation on the christian minister, who is thus honoured, which he will not be slow to feel and acknowledge.

Encouraged by facts like these, the directors venture to make a direct and specifick appeal to christian females. Will they not promote the object of this institution by *their influence?* We do not, indeed, expect, that they will stand up in the pulpit or popular assembly, and pour out their thoughts and feelings, as advocates of this precious cause. But let it not be thought, that because they may not exert the influence of the orator or preacher, their influence may not be powerful and happy.—At the domestic fire-side, and in the social circle; in little assemblies, where none but females are admitted, and in the course of epistolary correspondence, if they will put forth their powers, their influence *shall be felt.*—In such circumstances, they need not—should not hesitate, to detail facts, offer arguments, and make appeals, such as are fitted to awaken a deep compassion in every bosom for those, who are deprived of "the means of grace," and to call forth vigorous efforts, to remove their wants, by multiplying for their benefit ministers of the Gospel. Let them describe, as a christian woman may describe, the condition of many of our new settlements and broken parishes; let them hold up to view the broken hearts of christian men and women, who never see a pastor's face, or hear his voice; let them point out the progress of the rising generation in such places towards infamy in this world, and perdition in a future; let them describe the prostration of every valuable moral institution, and the proud triumph of vice and infidelity over every thing precious, and fair, and blessed; let their souls come forth, moved with compassion for the destitute and wretched communities, whose cause they are pleading, and they shall make a deep impression on many hearts: they shall arouse many a soul and enlist many an arm, which the preacher and the orator could never reach and affect. A christian woman, thus engaged, may awaken the sympathies of a father, brother, husband, or friend, and direct them into a channel, in which they shall greatly promote the design, which fills her eye and warms her heart. She may gather a circle of female friends around her, and transfuse her own thoughts and feelings into their minds, and send them away on an errand of mercy to their respective fire-sides. She may employ her pen to speak to those, whom she cannot address in a living voice; and in various ways, and by many agencies, she may plead with good hope of success, the cause of education societies.—Nor is this the only way in which she may promote this cause by her influence. Within the circle of her acquaintance she may see a youth of piety, talents, and enterprise, who loves the church; who loves immortal souls; who would gladly "spend and be spent," as a christian preacher in

untiring efforts, to bring them to the feet of Jesus Christ. But this youth may be embarrassed by *poverty*. A fire is concealed within him, which if kindled to a flame might communicate warmth and light to thousands. But he needs counsel, encouragement, and aid. And these he may receive through female agency. A pious mother may lift her eyes to the holy office, and encourage him to aspire to its labours and rewards. That pious mother may have a friend, who may exert an influence in behalf of this precious youth, in one circle and another; and a train of means may be put in operation by female hands, which shall draw forth from his obscurity, and consecrate to the church, a Baxter, an Edwards, a Buchanan!

The fact, already presented, which furnished the occasion for this somewhat lengthened appeal, demonstrates, that christian women may promote this sacred cause by personal benefactions. Their personal benefactions, the directors would earnestly solicit. They have often seen the devotees of fashion expend gold and silver in gratifying vanity—in pampering a passion for shew and parade.—Let the disciples of Jesus Christ be equally devoted; and they may lay their hands on the same means, and employ them for a higher and better purpose.—In almost all our towns, moreover, individuals may be found, who would think it a privilege, to aid a youth of piety and promise, in his efforts to prepare for the sacred office, by making a donation of a few yards of cloth, or a fleece of wool. Let such donations be solicited, received and collected together. Hands enough may be found, which would very cheerfully reduce them to a form, in which they would supply the wants of many a student, who is oppressed by poverty. And why should not this method of doing good, so easy and simple, so manifestly adapted to their sphere and occupation, be faithfully employed by female hands?

The directors cannot refrain from reminding the ministers of Christ, that the prosperity of this precious institution deeply depends on *their* influence and efforts. We long to hear the pulpit speak out on this subject in its most impressive tones—in its loudest thunder. We are eager to enjoy to the full extent of its powers the aid of so strong an ally. And while we are gratfeully mindful of the encouragement and assistance, which through this medium, we have hitherto received, we cannot withhold a publick expression of our belief, that if employed with a warmer zeal and a firmer purpose, much higher results might be realized.

The directors believe, that they express the sentiments of their friends and patrons, as well as their own, when they say: the cause in which we are engaged, forbids us to indulge a desponding thought. Despond we will not. The most valuable productions in nature are slow of growth. The most stupenduous and important events

in divine providence have not been the rapid movements of a day They have been brought about by years of anxiety and toil.—The progress of the church from its commencement to its consummation, our Saviour does not hesitate to illustrate by the growth of a spire of wheat; "first the blade; then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear." What if this be with us "the day of small things?" It is, we believe the twilight of the rising sun.—We indulge a strong and delightful confidence, that the day is hastening on, when all the friends of Jesus Christ in this vicinity, will gather around the banner, which in the "name of the Lord," we have ventured to set up. They will cheerfully devote property, talents, and influence to the sublime object of multiplying the "heralds of salvation" But whoever may afford us their encouragement and aid, we cannot forget, that, "*except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.*" We, therefore, will not cease to lift up our eyes to Jesus Christ. We will lean upon His arm. *The cause is all His own.* Whatever of assistance, encouragement and resources, we may need, He can—we trust, He *will* afford us. He will inspire us with fresh resolution and increased vigour. He will enable us "to run without weariness;—to push our object forward to the happiest consummation with unsleeping assiduity, and untiring effort. Nor will He desert us, till a company of christian preachers shall go forth equal to the exigencies of a dying world!

WILLIAM PAGE, *Secretary.*

Brandon, January 11, 1826.

N. B.—The Executive Committee request ministers of the Gospel to read the preceding Report to their congregations; and urge upon them a serious attention to this important object.

Local Agents are earnestly solicited to transmit to the Treasury, the annual collections in their hands, as soon as convenient.—Owing to the difficulty of passing at the time of the annual meeting, but few returns, as the following statement of Donations, &c. will show, have yet been made.—Immediate assistance is needed.

If any mistake should be discovered in the list of Life Members, information of it is requested by the Executive Committee.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

The Treasurer of the North-Western Branch of the American Education Society, in account with the Executive Committee.

1826 January 11.		Dr.
	To balance in the Treasury, 12th Jan. 1825.	2 29
	" Amount of contributions,	91 05
	" " Received from Auxiliary Societies.	169 83
	" " " " Life Members.	100 00
	" " " " Missionary Fields.	7 51
	" " " " Donations, annual Subscribers, &c.	104 12
		$474 65

1826 January 11.		Cr.
	By cash, pr. Beneficiaries,	412 00
	" " " for contingent expences,	75
		412 75
		$61 90

Middlebury, 11th January, 1826.

IRA STEWART, *Treasurer.*

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT.

Hon. RICHARD SKINNER.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Hon. CHAUNCEY LANGDON,
Hon. THOMAS HAMMOND,
Hon. WILLIAM HALL,
Col. OZIAS BUEL,
Hon. J. D. FARNSWORTH,
BENJ. G. ROOTS, Esq.
Hon. Z R. SHIPHERD,
Gen. SAMUEL STRONG,
BENJ. SWIFT, Esq.
Hon. C. K. WILLIAMS.

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS FOR LIFE, ACCORDING TO A PROVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

JOSEPH BURR, Esq. REUBEN SKINNER, Esq.

DIRECTORS.

Rev. JOSHUA BATES, D. D.
Rev. CHESTER WRIGHT,
Rev. T. A. MERRILL,
Rev. JEDEDIAH BUSHNELL
Rev. ABRAHAM BROWNSON
Rev. WILLIAM JACKSON,
Rev. ETHAN SMITH,
Rev. OTTO S. HOYT,
Rev. BENJ. B. SMITH,
PETER STARR, Esq.
Rev. WILLARD PRESTON,
WM. PAGE, Esq.
Rev. BERIAH GREEN.

Rev. CHARLES WALKER, *Secretary.*

IRA STEWART, Esq. *Treasurer.*

Rev. JOSHUA BATES,
Rev. THOMAS A. MERRILL,
Rev. WILLARD PRESTON. } *Executive Committee,*

N. B. The seventh annual meeting of the Society will be holden at Orwell, on the second Wednesday in January, 1827.—Preacher, Rev. WILLIAM JACKSON, or Rev. BERIAH GREEN.

LIFE MEMBERS.

Peter Aikin
James Adams
Ezra Allen
* Rev. Heman Ball
Rev. Joshua Bates
* Anna Bates
Mary Bates
Hannah Bates
Abigail Bates
Joshua Bates Jr.
John Bates
Prentiss Bates
Jay Ballard
——— Bennet
Milo L. Bennet
Dea. Timothy Boardman
Mary Boardman
Ozias Buel
Jeremiah Bingham
Calvin Bingham
Elijah Bordman
Rev. Luther P. Bloget
Rev. Jedediah Bushnell
Levi O. Birchard
Frederick Button
Josiah Burton
Elisha Brewster
Isaac Burton
Elijah Church
Ozias Clarke
Rachel Clarke
Rev. Joel Clap
Joshua D. Cobb
John M. Clark
Robert Clark
Chester Clark
Harriet B. Cook
Rev. Rufus Cushman
Lewis Chapin
Isaac Chatterton
Rev. Amos Drury
Calvin Drury
* Hannah Deming
Simeon Edgerton
Jacob Edgerton
Mrs. Edgerton
Fanny Fuller
Joseph D. Farnsworth
Abner Forbes
John Fox
Dorastus Fitch
Mrs. Fitch
Rev. John Griswold
Rev. Beriah Green
* Ebenezer Gridley
Luther Grandy
Sylvanus Gregory
Susan Gregory
Cyrus Graves
Cyrus Gates
Allen Goodrich
Josiah F. Goodhue
Harry Griswold
Nathaniel Gibson
Rev. Daniel Haskell
William Hollister
Samuel Hooker
Truman Hooker
Samuel Hickok
James Hickok
Lucy Hough
Henry Howe
Rev. Henry Hunter
Lewis Hurd
William G. Hooker
Melinda Hooker
John M. Hooker
Nancy C. Hooker
Rev. John Hough
Lucretia Hunt
Frederick Hall
Fanny Hall
Isaac Higly
Stephen Hinsdale

Joel Hamilton
William Hall
Rev. Lemuel Haynes
Rev. J. S. Hough
Rev. Otto S. Hoyt
Rev. Eli S. Hunter
Samuel Hunt
Josiah Hurd
Moses Hall
Ezra Isham
* Ebenezer Ingersoll
Rev. John Ingersoll
Rev. William Jackson
Horace Janes
Noah Janes
Levi Johnson
Rev. Sherman Kellogg
Rev. Phinehas Kingsly
Martha Kingsbury
Phinehas Kitchell
Rev. Mason Knapen
Andrew Leach
Rev. Elijah Lyman
Rev. Alexander Lovell
Chauncey Langdon
Rev. Thomas A. Merrill
Eliza Merrill
Enos Merrill
John Merrill
Charlotte L. Merrill
Anna Merrill
Ephraim Morehouse
Rev. Eli Moody
Rev. Daniel O. Morton
Lucretia P. Morton
William Marsh
Sarah Marsh
Alexander Miller
Stephen Martindale
Rev. S. Martindale, Jr.
Moses Noyes
Rev. Ami Nichols
Samuel Northrop
John Noyes
Obadiah Noble
Ira Northrop

William Page
Robert B. Patton
John Penfield
Nathan Peirce
Robert Pierpont
Joseph Porter
Nathaniel Parker
Rev. Absalom Peters
Harriet H. Peters
Nancy Parker
Silas Pratt
Rev. Willard Preston
David Robinson
Anna Robinson
Moses Robinson
Heman Rood
Rev. Ralph Robinson
Josiah Rising
Ebenezer G. Roots
Zebulon R. Shipherd
Timothy Skinner
Rev. Elihu Smith
Rev. Ethan Smith
Stephen S. Smith
Rev. Harvey Smith
Rev. Worthington Smith
Betsey B. Smith
John R. Shute
Franklin Sherrill
John H. Sanderson
Rev. Benjamin B. Smith
Jonathan Steele
Richard Skinner
Calvin Sheldon
Phinehas Strong
Nathan Stoddard
Seth P. Sheldon
Asa Simonds
Peter Starr
Eunice Starr
Ira Stewart
Betsey Stewart
Cynthia Stewart
John Simmons
Asina Strong
Salem Towne

Ithamar Tilden
John Wells
Timothy Woodford
Rev. Benjamin Wooster
Noah B. Wells
Elisha Warner
Rev. Charles Walker
Lucretia Walker
Hiram Walker
Sarah Wing
Samuel Walker
Rufus Wainwright
Ebenezer Wilcox
Rev. Calvin Yale,

DONATIONS, &c.

Account of money received by the Treasurer of the North-Western Branch of the American Education Society, since the publication of the last Annual Report, to 11th January, 1826.

A Friend, $1,00

RUPERT.

Dea. Stephen Smith, $1.—Increase Sheldon 1.—Rufus Harmon, 1. Dea. Fisher, pr Rev. Wm. Jackson, 2 00 $5 00

ENOSBURGH.

Valentine Nichols, 1— Moses Wright, 1.—George Tailor, 1.—Nevi Nichols $1.—Jonas Bartell, 1.—Ephraim Adams, 1.—Female Education Society, 026. 6 26

CORNWALL.

Female Education Society, by Mrs. Lane, Treasurer, 23,08 ; Contribution in the Congregational Society, 5,20 ; Enos Morgan, 1 ; Eliphlet Samson, 1 ; Reuben Bingham, 3, ; Mulford Kitchel, 1, ; Timo. M. Crane, 1, ; Jacob Peck, 1, ; Horace Linsley, 1, ; James Rockwell, 1, Shubal Ripley, 1 ; Newton Lewis, 1, ; Jeremiah Bingham, 2, ; Female Cent Society, 3. 45 28

ORWELL.

Contribution in the Congregational Society, 8,21, ; Deac. N. Bascomb, 1, ; Col. W Branch, 1, ; Clark Sanford, 1, ; Col. J B. Scovel, 1, ; Isaac Jennings, 1, ; Samuel Young, 1, ; Deac. D. Bascomb, 1, 15 21

POULTNEY.

J. T. & D. Hooker, avails of a charity field, 3, ; B. & W. Farnham, do. do. 2, ; Rev, E Smith 1, ; C. Guernsey, 1, ; H. Guernsy, 1 ; J. Wheeler, 1, ; L & C. Strong, 1, ; Contribution in the Congregational Society, 5,32. 15 32

RUTLAND, EAST PARISH.

Chas K. Williams, 1 ; J. D. Butler, 2, ; G W Daniels, 1, ; Mrs T. Dike, 50, ; Mrs. C. A. Page. 2, ; Mrs S. Hooker, 1, ; A. L. Brown, 2, ; William Page, 1,25, ; Rev C Walker, 1, ; Contribution in the Congregational Society, 24.25, ; Young Ladie's Benevolent Society, 5, ; Mrs Pierpoint, 2, ; A balance, 1, 44 00

RUTLAND, WEST PARISH.

Deac T. Boardman, a life member, 10,00, ; Mrs. Mary Boardman, do. 10,00, ; Contribution in the Congregational Society, 10,50, 30, 50

BRANDON.

Contribution in the Congregational Society, 9,20, ; Isaac Hill, 1, ; avails of a Missionary Field, by a number of Individuals, 7.25, and 2,75 by Rev. Beriah Green to constitute him a member for life. 20 20

FAIRHAVEN.

Geo. Warren, 2, ; Sarah Warren, 2, Mary Ann Warren, 1. 5

BENSON.

Contribution in the Congregational Society, by Mr. Goodrich, 3 00

PITTSFORD.

Female Society, by Mrs. Ingersoll, 11 67

SUDBURY.

Contribution in the Congregational Society, by the Rev. Mr Knapen, 3 34

WEYBRIDGE

Female Education Society, by Mrs. L Drake, Treasurer. 1 77

ADDISON

Miss Swift, by S Wright. 1 37

ARLINGTON.

Two Ladies, by Rev. Abraham Bronson, 2 50

MIDDLEBURY.

James W Stephens, 1, : Articles sold from depository, 17,20, ; Female Education Society, East part of the town, by Mrs. H. Foot, 1.20, ; Female Education Society, N E part of the town, by Miss Severance, 1, ; Female Auxiliary Society, by Mrs Rebecca Miller, 27,13, Rev. Joshua Bates, D D. 10, ; Rev. John Hough, 1, ; Peter Starr, 3, ; Ira Stewart, 3, ; Rufus Wainwright, 1, ; Harvey Bell, 1, ; Saml. Swift, 1, Jona. Hagar, 1, ; Elisha Brewster, 1, ; Horatio Seymour 4, 73 53

DORSET.

Rev. William Jackson, 3 00

SHOREHAM.

Contribution in the Congregational Society, by Mr. L. T. Birchard, 8 01

SCHEDULE

Of articles received since the publication of the last Annual Report, by the Special Agent (for the town of Middlebury,) of the North Western Branch of the A. E. Society, with their value as estimated by the donors.

MIDDLEBURY.

Female Auxiliary Society, South part of the town, 23 lbs Wool, pr, Mrs. Harriet Foot.—Do. in the Nort part of the Town, 19 1-4 yds. Flannel, pr Mrs. Severance

ENOSBURGH

From Female Auxiliary Society, by Nancy Davis, one blanket 3,50,—seven pair socks, 3,50,—one Vest, 1,50,—seven shirts, 5,82 —$14 32.

WALLINGFORD

Two woolen vests,—two pair socks,—two yards fulled cloth,—7 1-4 yds. tow cloth,—pr Rev. Loring Brewster

PITTSFORD.

Female Auxiliary Society, one bed, 3,50, —one pillow, 75,—three shirts, 1,50,—one pair pillow cases 50,—three sheets, 1,50, —four pair socks, 2,00—six shirts, 3 00,—three vests, 6,50,—seven yds fulled cloth, 7,00,—twelve yds. flannel, 6,00, by Rev. T. A. Merrill

ADDISON.

Five pair socks, from Clarissa Swift.

BRANDON

From Ladies in Brandon, pr Mrs Green, six shirts, 8,62,—three vests, 4,62,—one pair pantaloons, 6,75,—two pair socks, 84,—two pair mittens, 84,—one pair pillow cases, 50,—2 3 4 yds. cloth, from Sara June, Esq 2,75.—$21,32.